

GOLD

L. T. Fri. Jan. 11 1935

Common
7/22

The nine lonely men were lonelier than ever today - the Supreme Court of the United States, secluded in private session. The court has completed the hearings in the gold case. The arguments are all in. And right now the Justices are meditating their decision.

Many spectacular things have been happening these days, but so far as importance to this land of ours is concerned, they are just so much excitement as compared with the tremendous issue that lies between the Supreme Court and gold. ~~Forty-one~~ ^{Sixty-nine} billion dollars hangs in the balance, the greatest sum of money ever involved in a legal decision. The figure is large enough to put the economic structure of this country at stake. So true is this, that the venerable justices broke their tradition of lofty reserve. Speculators were amazed by the lively demonstrations of the interests on the part of the Court. It is mighty seldom that the Judges of ~~the~~ ^{Uncle Sam's} highest tribunal animate the Supreme Court proceedings by making remarks and comments from the bench and take a personal hand in the discussion. Yet they did that in the arguments ~~ex~~ that have just been completed. Chief

47

Justice Charles Evans Hughes, so far broke his habitual reserve as to demand - "Where did the government under the Constitution get the power to alter a bond?" And Justice James C. MacReynolds spoke up and asked whether Congress had the right to destroy the value of a government contract. From the temper of these remarks, it might be suspected that the Supreme Court might be of a mood to hand down a decision that the Government's gold policy is illegal and unconstitutional. If that were to happen - why it rather staggers the imagination to envision what the ~~question~~ consequences might be.

First, it is all of the most fundamental importance.

8
Yet the actual, immediate questions laid before the Supreme Court are rather absurd ~~and~~ petty. There are five cases. Five different individuals appealed, demanding redress. One example is enough to represent them all.

Mr. Norman C. Norman of New York holds some bonds of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. Each bond is supposed to pay him Twenty-two dollars a year in gold, or its equivalent. But the President called in the nation's gold and cut the value of the

dollar to a shade more than fifty-nine cents. Mr. Norman cannot get his interest paid in gold and has to take paper dollars of

depreciated value. Protesting against this, he brought suit

against the ~~Baltimore & Ohio Railroad~~, ^{B. & O.,} demanding that his

Twenty-two Dollar interest coupons should be redeemed either

in the original amount of gold or in enough currency to buy that

original amount of gold. That amount of ^{our present} currency would come to

Thirty-eight ~~xxxx~~ dollars and ten cents. So there is the crucial

^{will it be} point, Thirty-eight dollars and ten cents for a Twenty-two dollar

interest coupon? This small case has ~~very~~ large implications.

It attacked ⁵ ~~the~~ the entire gold policy of the President. So the

Attorney General of the United States joined forces with the

lawyers of the Railroad in opposing the case. ^{And thus} it was fought

through the lower courts on up to the highest tribunal ^{where it} ~~is~~ ^{is tonight - awaiting decision.}

Obviously, if the Supreme Court finds that the ~~Baltimore~~ ^{B. & O.}

~~and Ohio Railroad~~ should pay Mr. Norman's interest coupon with

the old-fashioned one hundred cent dollar instead of the new

fifty-nine cent dollar, why the same thing would apply to all

bonds - to the entire Hundred billion dollars worth of bonds that

are now in existence. It would mean that a Hundred billion

9

dollars worth would have to be redeemed by a hundred and sixty-nine billion of our New Deal dollars. Sixty-nine billion dollars in the balance ! Another point would be that people who have paid mortgages, taxes and various other sorts of indebtedness with depreciated dollars, might be called upon to make up the difference between in a ratio of the old dollar to the new.

They say in Washington that the Administration is a bit worried about the decision that the Supreme Court is now meditating. And no wonder ! But the Administration officials pin their belief on the supposition that the high justices will not only consider the niceties of constitutional legality, but also the situation of the country. They don't believe the Supreme Court will plunge the nation into the bewildering unsettlement that might result from a decision against the gold policy.

The New York Daily News goes so far as to summarize the dilemma in the following terms: "It would be much easier to get a new United States Supreme Court than to go back to the old dollar." The whole matter is rather complicated and heavy - Yes, heavy with significance, with the government's gold policy in the balance!

RELIEF

The President is working hard drafting his program of social security, unemployment and old-age pensions. Today we have some pretty sound information ^{concerning} ~~on~~ the legislation that is being drafted in the White House. A sub-committee of experts has made a report to Mr. Roosevelt. On the basis of this report, the details are being formulated for old-age pensions at the rate of fifty dollars a month, for needy persons who are over sixty-five. Under the heading of unemployment insurance, we find that the premiums ~~for the insurance~~ are to be contributed by both labor and capital. To raise the money labor would contribute one percent of its wages, and industry would contribute three percent of its payrolls. Thus the working man would hand ^{over for} ~~in to the~~ unemployment insurance organization one cent out of every dollar of his pay, and the boss would kick in three cents for every dollar paid to his employees.

These are the major features of the social securities legislation that the President will recommend to Congress -- together with a further proposal for health insurance, free medical attention to needy persons, and a large program to promote the health of children.

~~Good Evening, Everybody:~~

2
After days of the flare and the drama of personalities, the trial at Flemington settled abruptly today to the stage of technical complications, and the theme was handwriting. On previous days the flare of courtroom excitement was so high that it made the news commentator almost forget about any other news.

But today it was different. While the fate of Bruno Richard Huaptmann continued to be ground through the mill of the law, with the technicalities of experts bristling all over the place, one became rather suddenly conscious that elsewhere events of the greatest importance were under way. ~~Now so once more, this evening, let's have a broadcast that will roam far over the events of the world.~~

Still, the fascination of the drama ^{at} ~~of~~ Flemington ~~remained,~~ ^{remained,} ~~still was there,~~ with peculiarly interesting aspects of the science of handwriting. The salient fact is that Albert S. Osborne, one of the foremost ~~of~~ graphologists, declared

emphatically that it was Hauptmann who had written the ransom notes, that the script on the notes and Hauptmann's handwriting were the same.

Most of us have seen newspaper reproductions of those famous ransom notes. I wish I could reproduce them right now, but I can't. That's where the newspapers have it over the radio. So let's just take some ^{of the} more salient points that Expert Osborne made concerning those peculiarly written notes, comparing them with specimens written by Hauptmann.

Right here there's a complication. The ransom notes were written in a disguised hand. They say that when Hauptmann wrote specimens for the police he disguised his script. But as they had him write again and again, he couldn't keep up the disguise and finally lapsed into his natural handwriting.

Moreover the police have an example of his natural handwriting -- which he wrote when he ^{filled} ~~failed~~ in his application for a driver's license.

~~The most telling handwriting arguments made by~~

Expert Osborne pointed to the letter "n", showing that it was a peculiarity of Hauptmann to start the letter "n" above the line so that it looked something like a "v." That characteristic, he said, is in the ransom notes.

Then he testified that a letter-count in the long series of ransom notes showed that the letter "t" was uncrossed three hundred and ninety-one times. Yes, there are three hundred and ninety-one "t's" that the ransom writer failed to cross. Then he stated that Hauptmann, in his regular handwriting, characteristically neglects to cross the "t's."

The "n's" and the "t's" were the outstanding arguments in a lot of elaborate details.

The expert then pointed out that the writer of the ransom messages had a peculiar way of spelling English words - a foreigner's way. For example, the negative - "not". The ransom writer repeatedly spelled "not" - n-o-t-e. At this point Hauptmann turned sharply to his attorneys. "I don't spell the word that way", he said.

And then of course there was that inevitable feature -

those strange symbols. Expert Osborne declares that the interlocking circles with the three punch holes were an unmistakable dead give-away. When the slips of paper are put one on top of the other, the holes match perfectly ! They must have been punched with a sharp instrument at the same time. Now, the ransom collector produced the symbols, the same symbols left by the kidnapper.

With the hand-writing finger pointing at him, Hauptmann again grew red around the neck and ears, that characteristic way of his of showing excitement, for all his stolid calm.

The theme of handwriting pointed to still another of the enigmatic figures that have flitted through the testimony. This time it is the name of J. J. Faulkner. It all goes back to a man who turned in nearly \$3,000 worth of gold certificates to the Federal Exchange Bank, and got ordinary currency in exchange, and vanished. The gold certificates were later found to be part of the ransom money. This incident connects with the subsequent suicide of a man named Faulkner. But there is nothing to show that this man was the Faulkner who turned in the kidnap money. The

testimony today was merely that Faulkner's signature was not in Hauptmann's handwriting.

And still another mysterious person flitted in and out of the testimony. Lloyd Fischer, second in command among the defence lawyers, was examining a federal agent. And he asked: "Do you know of a deposit of Three thousand Dollars made by Max Schlang, a florist of New York?" The listeners pricked up their ears. It has been believed that the defense would name certain persons as the kidnappers. Maybe the moment had come! But not at all. The question led to nothing. And no more was said of the mysterious Schlang.

More reports of new witnesses are heard. Witnesses from Germany. The New York detective who went to Germany to investigate Hauptmann is aboard a ship. He sailed yesterday. This detective investigated not only Hauptmann but the man Fisch, from whom Hauptmann said he got the ransom money. And now it is believed that he has gone to Germany to bring back a sister of the late Isador Fisch and also a former German corporal who trained Hauptmann in the Kaiser's army.

One thing to make this all the more plausible is that Fisch's sister, back in Germany, got a leave of absence a few days ago, permission to take a long vacation from her job in a brush factory. And reports have come that Fisch's family are eager to vindicate him, clearing of the accusations implied in Hauptmann's statements.

On the whole a quiet day at Flemington.

SAAR

Tonight's the time for a round-up view of the Saar problem. More reports come of disturbances. The number of bitter clashes indicates clearly enough that there is a considerable anti-Nazi element furiously opposed to re-union with Germany. But the final opinion on the eve of the election is just what it's been all along -- that when the Saarlanders vote on the three propositions, whether to join with France or remain under the government of the League of Nations, or return to Germany -- the verdict by a large majority will be: Germany. And then the Berlin government will make payments over a period of years to France to reimburse France for French claims on coal mines.

FRANCE

58

The idea of Dictatorship certainly is in the air in many parts of the world. France seems to be one of the countries immune from it. But just the same, ^A French newspaper has been conducting a contest, a straw vote based on the question -- Whom would the French people select as Dictator, if they were to have a Dictatorship? The winner -- Marshall Petain, the old World War commander. The second place went to Pierre Laval, one-time Premier and now Foreign Minister.

It is significant of the French state of mind that the straw vote Dictatorial honors should go to the greatest ^{French} of ~~the~~ surviving World War commanders -- Petain, who took so large a part in the defeat of Germany. ~~He is seventy eight, now, the son of a baker, who joined the army as a private and worked up to the highest command. He has a drawerful of medals, and he keeps them there -- seldom wears them.~~ The old warrior is seventy-eight, tall, trim, and still athletic. He ~~is~~ skips rope every morning to keep fit. They tell a story of how, before the war, when he wasn't a famous hero, he was

evicted from his apartment in Paris because his rope-skipping annoyed the tenants and jarred the building.

And along about this time my rope-skipping with the news begins to jar the nerves of the next radio gymnasts who are trying to get into this studio.

So, SOLONG UNTIL MONDAY.